



## **The Tanjung Bungah, Penang-Construction Site Tragedy. 21 October 2017**

1. We are deeply saddened by the loss of eleven lives at a single construction site. It is a tragedy to the families, the state and the nation. Condolences from Malaysian Institute of Planners (MIP) to the families.

2. This tragedy has brought many comments from various quarters and stakeholders. Whilst opinions are welcome and necessary, for an informed society, some might be misleading and often politicised thus leading away from the pertinent issues at hand.

3. MIP is of the opinion that the construction industry system and processes should be reviewed in terms of responsibility and accountability of various parties rather than merely on the need of speedy approvals as advocated by many others in the industry. MIP strongly thinks that the existing policies and guidelines for developments on hill slopes/hill sites needs to be reviewed immediately, to address the crucial issues of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). We need to move forward and find ways to reduce the possibility of recurrence of this tragedy.

4. We take note that rapid urbanization, throughout the world and in Malaysia, has increased the pressure on our limited natural resources such as land. Tanjung Bungah is a reflection of the existing challenges and needs between economic and environmental sustainability.

5. This site tragedy has to be seen from various aspects. We will focus on two important ones. i) The approval process, planning permission (Kebenaran Merancang) as stated in Town and country Planning Act 1976 (Act 172) and the construction process on site. The process on site has been fully explained by IEM and MIP is in agreement with their views. Implementing all safety and engineering requirements at the site is a must.



6. MIP would like to call all parties to support the strengthening of the process of Planning Permission. Kebenaran Merancang is the key approval needed for all developments and should be strengthened further by the contributions of all experts and professionals. Calls for the process to be expedited should not be at the expense of safety, the environment, the impact on livability and the general interest of the public at large. This tragedy has reminded us of the need to review existing approval processes and be more stringent and complete in our guidelines and legislations.

7. MIP hopes that the decision making process must include public objections and views and all planning decisions be made transparent and accountable. The possibility of uploading decisions of the Local Authority for public scrutiny should be seriously considered.

8. MIP is willing to work closely with all quarters and all level of government, professionals, consultants including stakeholders in assisting and providing professional expertise and input in achieving a safe, healthy, comfortable and sustainable environment.

**TPr Ihsan Zainal Mokhtar**

President,

**Malaysian Institute of Planners.**

25 October 2017.